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1962/10/15

~~N~~ C-10879 SS To authors: NS or IJC page

With specific reference to the proposal at hand, I also wonder whether the net reaction of the recipients of our warning would not be unfavorable to our interests. I agree that information of the sort we propose to put to use might, indeed, cause shipping companies in the recipient countries to have some doubts about the wisdom of continuing to send vessels to Cuba, but at the same time I foresee other reactions less desirable from our point of view. I am quite sure, given the general European view that we are overly concerned about the "Cuban problem", that the British reaction to our warning would be an immediate suspicion that we, indeed, intended to give suitable marine mines to exile groups for sowing in Cuban waters. If subsequently by some odd chance, a ship were blown up in Cuban waters by a mine, I do not see how we could avoid being blamed regardless of the truth of the matter.

There is always the possibility, of course, that nothing untoward would transpire after our warning and that we might thus obtain our psychological warfare objective without undue political cost.

I have one last question. What are the facts about the availability of marine mines? Is it, indeed, possible for anyone to acquire such weapons unless we give them to him? If not, it makes our whole story pretty weak.

R. Hillsman
Roger Hillsman

Attachments:

- Tab A - Examples of intelligence reports
- Tab B - Draft press release

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

- Sample Intelligence Report Number 2
based on Department of the Army Intelligence Report No. ID 2210967

1. FIELD NOTE: On 1 August 1962, Source was invited to meet with Francisco LOPEZ Borges, age 39, living at SW 5th Street and 8th Avenue, Miami, and with Aldo VERA, former CASTRO Regime Chief of Investigation Bureau and Army Inspector General, LOPEZ and VERA are seeking financial support from Source and his friends. The following information was acquired at the meeting.

2. Aldo VERA is the chief of an anti-CASTRO organization known as MAP. It is VERA's intentions to commence active guerrilla operations in Cuba in the near future. VERA now has \$5000 which will be invested in a surplus, coast guard type boat which will be obtained and registered in Tampa, Florida. When the boat is in their possession they will move it to one of the keys of the Bahama islands which will be utilized as a base of operations against CASTRO.*

3. The plan calls for and requires the support of other interested Cubans who should contribute food, fuel and a second boat, in which a 500 watt radio transmitter will be installed. This boat would operate along the south coast of Cuba transmitting anti-CASTRO propaganda and at times attacking the coast with commando raids against military objectives. The coast guard boat based in the Bahamas would be used for supplies, and for commando type raids against the northern coast of Cuba, [and for planting mines off Cuban ports].*

4. Aldo VERA was cautious in his conversation and declined to provide further details. Basically [his boat] is funds, since he stated that the MAP has [some] [ammunition].

* Portion in brackets added to text of original report.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

1. A fairly reliable source reported that Antonio Veciana, leader of the Alpha 66 organization and who is currently in San Juan, Puerto Rico, on 20 Sept 1962 provided him with information concerning the current plans of the Alpha 66 organization.

2. Alpha 66 has plans for two additional actions against Cuba. If preparations can be completed, one action will be taken before the end of September 1962, otherwise the action will be not later than 13 October 1962 at which time Alpha 66 plans to hold a mass public rally in Sixto Escobar Stadium in San Juan.

3. On the next raid Alpha 66 hopes, as an incidental aspect to the operation, to capture several Russian technicians who will then be taken surreptitiously into Florida. The press will then be appropriately notified of the technicians arrival and location. Source added that Veciana's intent in this case was consistent with his (Veciana's) continuing desire to create an incident which would involve the United States and the Soviet Union.

4. Veciana said the boat and five-man crew used in the 11 September raid are standing by in Miami. Veciana confided that the crew on the first raid was instructed to avoid firing on individuals, however, the crew reported they had to kill several Cuban soldiers during that raid.

5. Veciana believes that Alpha 66 gained a great deal from the 11 Sept. raid and subsequent publicity, and he expects additional funds to be forthcoming. He said Alpha 66 needs at least ten thousand dollars monthly to carry on the program, and they are desperately seeking sources for arms and ammunition, particularly rockets for rocket launchers, and mines for use in Cuban coastal waters. Veciana said he will return to Miami in about two weeks.

6. Source said he has the impression that the Alpha 66 military section may consist of not much more than Veciana and the five crew members of the boat in Miami.

* Portion in brackets added to text of original report.

DRAFT

October 12, 1962

PLANTED ^{STORY} PRESS RELEASE

An activist anti-Castro Cuban exile group calling itself Alpha 66 has announced that the organization intends to carry out attacks on all ships loaded with supplies for Cuba. This announcement followed a raid which Alpha 66 spokesman reported their organization had executed against the Cuban north coast on October 8. The spokesman also indicated that Alpha 66 was responsible for attacks on several ships, including one of British registry, last September 10. The leaders described Alpha 66 as a nonpolitical, military organization whose only objective is to eradicate communism from Cuba.

Alpha 66 is one of many organizations of Cubans, inside and outside Cuba, whose members are pledged to overthrow the Communist-dominated Castro regime. Operating in various Caribbean countries, these organizations are engaged in a variety of activities ranging from anti-Castro propaganda to direct action. The US Government is unable to confirm reports that some of these groups contemplate air and sea strikes, the planting of mines in the waters off Cuban ports, and large-scale commando raids to achieve their purpose. The Alpha 66 "Statement of Intent", effective October 11, will be carried out, among other things, by attacks on any and all vessels, not just those from Iron Curtain countries, according to a radio broadcast by a leader of the group. This spokesman asserted that other raids are scheduled for the near future.

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Department has noted articles appearing in shipping publications that some Cuban exile groups may be planning mine one or more Cuban ports near future. Other sources available Department with record past reliability indicate some groups have inquired about availability mines and may have acquired capability such action.

While US exercising vigilance and whatever control we can over exile activities US territory (e.g. 150 additional border patrolmen assigned southeast US), multiplicity exile groups (more than three hundred in US alone) nature and length of US coast in proximity Cuba as well as fact Cuban exiles organized and active in number other countries bordering Caribbean, militate against effective and complete control.

You should inform host government that especially since Soviet presence Cuba, reports reaching Department indicate Cuban exiles throughout Caribbean area militant in mood and actively engaged planning whatever they can through own efforts make cost Soviet presence Cuba as high as possible. Despite US efforts our ability control situation far from complete. If vessels host government call Cuban ports, you should also alert host government possibility access one or more Cuban ports may near future be mined or otherwise become perilous. To best its ability US will endeavor keep governments concerned informed of further details.

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